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United States
Department of
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Selected Speeches and News Releases

April 26 - May 3, 1990

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Statement

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

Statement by Dr. Lester M. Crawford, Administrator, Food Safety and Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, May 2.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture welcomes the Food and Drug Administration's decision to allow irradiation of packaged fresh or frozen poultry to control microbial pathogens such as salmonella. USDA endorses the use of food irradiation to provide consumers with a safe, wholesome and nutritious food supply. This is why we petitioned FDA for this approval in 1986, and why we will proceed expeditiously with the rulemaking necessary to enable commercial irradiation of poultry.

The safety of irradiated foods has been carefully researched and thoroughly evaluated by the world's leading scientific and medical experts over the past 40 years. USDA agrees with the American Medical Association, the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Health Organization, and the Codex Alimentarius Commission that food irradiation can be extremely useful for public health protection, product quality and shelflife. More than 30 countries have approved and are using food irradiation technologies to help ensure food safety, and 12 countries have approved the use of irradiation on poultry.

In the United States, FDA has approved irradiation for insect disinfestation of grains and spices, control of insects in fresh fruit and vegetables, and control of trichina in pork.

Subsequent to these FDA approvals, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service issued guidelines for irradiation as a quarantine disinfestation treatment for papayas, and Food Safety and Inspection Service issued regulations for irradiation of pork to control trichina.

USDA requires that labels on irradiated meat and poultry products state the use of irradiation, because we believe full and complete disclosure of irradiation on wholesale and retail labels—coupled with a sound public information program—will result in public acceptance of this safe and effective technology.

Irradiation does not eliminate the need for careful handling, storage and cooking of food to prevent contamination from other microorganisms common to humans and the environment.

USDA believes it is appropriate to facilitate the introduction of new technologies that will better serve the public health and the public interest. Food irradiation is one of those technologies.

Jim Greene, (202) 382-0314

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News Releases

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

USDA ANNOUNCES SUPPORT LEVEL, BY TYPE, FOR 1990 CROP PEANUTS

WASHINGTON, April 26—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced average price support levels by type, quality and location for the 1990 peanut crop.

The levels are based on national price support levels of \$631.47 per short ton for quota peanuts and \$149.75 per short ton for additional peanuts.

The quota support level by type for an average grade ton of 1990 crop peanuts will be:

- \$629.81 for Virginia-type peanuts;
- \$636.49 for Runner-type peanuts;
- \$588.40 for Spanish-type peanuts
- \$629.81 for Valencia-type peanuts from the Southwest area which are suitable for cleaning and roasting; and
- \$588.40 for other Valencias.

The method of computing the price support levels for 1990 crop peanuts and the grades within the types is the same used for the 1989 crop except for Spanish-type peanuts. For Spanish-type peanuts, the sound mature kernel (SMK) value has been set at 0.5 percent below the SMK value for Runner-type peanuts. For the 1989 crop of Spanish-type peanuts the SMK value was the same as for Runner-type peanuts.

For each percent of sound mature kernels in a ton, including sound split kernels, the support level will be:

- Virginia-type peanuts, \$9.200;
- Runner-type peanuts, \$9.020;
- Spanish-type peanuts, \$8.975;
- Valencia-type peanuts in the Southwest area suitable for cleaning and roasting, \$9.440; and
- other Valencias, \$8.975.

The loan value for additional peanuts will be 23.71 percent of the applicable quota rate. This factor represents the ratio of the \$149.75 per short ton national support level for 1990 crop additional peanuts to the

\$631.47 per short ton national support level for 1990 crop quota peanuts.

As with the 1989 crop, the price support for 1990 crop peanuts on which a growth regulator was used will be discounted by 100 percent from the support rate that otherwise would be applicable.

The actual support level for an individual lot of peanuts will depend on the percent of the various sizes of kernels in each ton and other factors.

Robert Feist (202) 447-6789.

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NATURAL MICROBE MAY CURB MORMON CRICKET

WASHINGTON, April 26—A one-celled microbe that infects and kills Mormon crickets is being released in Idaho field tests this week as a team of federal and university scientists step up the war on these plant-eating insects in the west.

Jerome A. Onsager of the U.S. Department of Agriculture said a protozoan, a *Vairimorpha* species, can kill up to 90 percent of Mormon cricket populations without harming other insect populations. “We hope this microbe will stop the cricket’s occasional population explosions,” he said, “and thereby eliminate costly spraying of insecticides to protect many kinds of crop and range plants.”

Onsager, research leader for USDA’s Agricultural Research Service in Bozeman, Mont., said a wheat bran bait containing the protozoan is being placed in several areas of southern Idaho’s Freemont and Clark counties, known to harbor bands of crickets. The pests, up to 1.5 inches long, got their name when they attacked crops of Mormon settlers in Utah in 1848.

“The protozoan was found naturally infecting Mormon crickets in Colorado and Utah,” said entomologist John Henry. “It could be the most promising long-term weapon against them.” Henry is leading the tests in collaboration with ARS and other cooperators. He is an adjunct professor at Montana State University in Bozeman and recently retired from the ARS Rangeland Insects Laboratory there.

The U.S. Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Land Management is funding the tests through a grasshopper management project of USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Other cooperators include county extension agents, Ricks College in Rexburg, Idaho, and area ranchers.

“We want to gather enough data so we can help Mother Nature keep

one of her insects under control,” said Henry. “We don’t want to wipe out Mormon crickets—we only want to prevent their periodic population explosions that overwhelm natural controls. Mormon crickets can actually be beneficial because they eat noxious weeds and to a limited extent prey on grasshoppers.”

“If we can figure out effective ways to spread the protozoa among Mormon crickets, we could avoid spraying insecticides,” he said. Chemicals kill the crickets quickly but can also harm good bugs such as bees.

Vairimorpha does not harm other insects. It acts slowly, taking up to 12 days to multiply inside young crickets and cause death by consuming their fat, Henry said. Older crickets take longer or may survive, but the females lay fewer eggs.

“We’ve learned that females can pass the infection to their unborn offspring,” he added. “All growth stages of this cricket are very susceptible to the infection. It spreads by spores passed in feces, as well as by cannibalism and possibly by venereal means.”

Henry said these are hopeful signs the pests could be controlled by spreading live or dead infected crickets—approaches that will be tried later this spring and summer in Idaho and in Lake County, Mont.

Dennis Senft (415) 559-6068

#

NEW MEMBERS NAMED TO COOPERATIVE FORESTRY RESEARCH ADVISORY COUNCIL

WASHINGTON, April 26—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter today announced the appointment of six new members to the Cooperative Forestry Research Advisory Council.

They are Dr. Howard A. Spalt, vice president of research and development, Masonite Corporation, St. Charles, Ill., representing forest industry in the North Central region; Edwin G. Owens, forest research director of Westvaco Corporation, Summerville, S.C., representing forest industry in the Southern region; Philip F. Hahn, director of forestry research for the GeorgiaPacific Corporation, Cottage Grove, Ore., representing forest industry in the western Agricultural Experiment Stations; Rosann D. Durrah, executive director, Massachusetts Commission on Conservation of Soil, Water and Related Resources, Boston, Mass.,

representing soil and water volunteer organizations; and C. Dexter Gill, forest manager, Navajo Nation, Window Rock, Ariz., representing the American Indian Inter-Tribal Council.

The Cooperative Forestry Research Advisory Council will deliberate on the McIntire-Stennis forestry program with particular emphasis on forestry research planning and the annual apportionment of funds. The McIntire-Stennis program works to solve environmental issues in forestry by using scientific expertise of professors and graduate students of the 62 universities participating in the program.

The council will report to the secretary on regional and national planning and coordination of forestry research within the federal and state agencies, and forestry schools.

Boyd Post (202) 447-2016

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USDA PROPOSES REGULATIONS FOR THE EXPORT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, April 26—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing regulations for the payment of bonuses under the Export Enhancement Program, Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder said today.

The proposed regulations should simplify and clarify the program's administration because they consolidate information contained in various EEP announcements and eliminate any duplication that might have existed, he said.

USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service will continue to issue invitations for offers for specific initiatives under the EEP, Crowder said.

Interested parties have until June 25 to comment on the proposals. Comments must be submitted in writing to L.T. McElvain, Director, Commodity Credit Corporations Operations Division, USDA, FAS, Room 4503-S, Washington, D.C. 20250-1000; telephone (202) 447-6211.

The proposed regulations are published in the April 25 Federal Register.

The EEP is intended to increase U.S. agricultural commodity exports and to encourage other countries exporting agricultural commodities to undertake serious negotiations on agricultural trade problems. Under the

program, bonuses are made available by CCC to enable U.S. exporters to meet prevailing world prices for targeted commodities and destinations.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE FOR UPLAND COTTON

Washington, April 26—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-4.9) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, April 27, through midnight Thursday, May 3.

Since the adjusted world price (AWP) is above the 1988 and 1989 crop base quality loan rates of 51.80 and 50.00 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rates for the 1988 and 1989 crops of upland cotton during this period are equal to the respective loan rates for the specific quality and location.

The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates. Because the AWP in effect is above the established loan rate, loan deficiency payments are not available for 1989-crop upland cotton produced from using current shipment prices to using forward shipment prices in the Northern Europe price component of the AWP calculation. For Week 1 and Week 2, the Northern Europe price = $(2 \times \text{Northern Europe current price}) + (\text{Northern Europe forward price})^3$. This procedure was adopted to avoid a dramatic change in the AWP that could occur at the end of the marketing year with no transition period, due to differences between new and old crop price quotes.

Because both current shipment prices and forward shipment prices for "coarse count" cotton C.I.F. northern Europe are not yet available, the Northern Europe coarse count price this week will equal the 5-day average of the 3 lowest-priced current shipment prices for "coarse count" cotton C.I.F. northern Europe for the preceding Friday through Thursday. The six week transition period for the Northern Europe coarse count price component of the AWP will begin whenever both the

Northern Europe coarse count current price and the Northern Europe coarse count forward price become available.

In calculating the adjustment to average U.S. spot market location, Thursday's current shipment prices for U.S. Memphis territory and the California/Arizona territory as quoted for Middling 1-3/32 inch cotton C.I.F. northern Europe were used.

Based on data for the week ending April 26, the AWP for upland cotton and the coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price

Northern Europe Price	81.18
Adjustments:	
Average U.S. spot market location	13.17
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	2.20
Average U.S. location	0.39
Sum of Adjustments	-15.76
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	65.42 cents/lb.

Coarse Count Adjustment

Northern Europe Price	81.18
Northern Europe Coarse Count Price	-77.52
	3.66
Adjustment to SLM 1-inch cotton	-4.75
	-1.09
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT	0 cents/lb.

The next AWP and coarse count adjustment announcement will be made on Thursday, May 3.

Charles Cunningham (202) 447-7954

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YEUTTER NAMES MEMBERS TO NATIONAL DAIRY BOARD

WASHINGTON, April 26—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter today announced the appointment of eleven new members and one incumbent to the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board for three-year terms beginning May 1, and ending April 30, 1993.

Newly appointed are: (region 2) Paul A. Rollin, Burrell, Calif.; (region 3) Francis D. Gregerson, Longmont, Colo.; (region 4) James H. Loper

Jr., Santa Teresa, N.M.; (region 5) Robert J. Gaebe, New Salem, N.D.; (region 6) Victoria H. Coughlin, Watertown, Wis.; Jerome G. Servais, West Salem, Wis.; (region 7) Tim R. Volk, Battle Creek, Neb.; (region 8) Stephen K. Plenge, Shepherdsville, Ky.; (region 9) John O. Spreng Sr., Bucyrus, Ohio; (region 11) Penrose Hallowell, Ottsville, Pa.; and (region 12) Raymond E. Johnson, Schaghticoke, N.Y.

Reappointed is Leo O'Brien Jr., South Burlington, Vt., region 13.

The National Dairy Promotion and Research Board, composed of 36 dairy farmers, was established by the Dairy and Tobacco Adjustment Act of 1983 to develop and administer a coordinated program of promotion, research and nutrition education. The board is authorized to design programs to strengthen the dairy industry's position in domestic and foreign markets.

The national program is financed by a mandatory 15-cent per hundredweight assessment on all milk produced in the contiguous 48 states and marketed commercially by dairy farmers.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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USDA RELEASES STATISTICS ON CAPTIVE SUPPLIES FOR 1989

WASHINGTON, April 27—The percentage of cattle owned or controlled by packer firms prior to slaughter (captive supplies) increased approximately three percent in 1989, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The 1989 commercial steer and heifer slaughter was 26.2 million head. Of that number, 23.7 million, or 90.2 percent, were slaughtered by the top 15 steer and heifer slaughterers, who filed special reports with USDA's Packers and Stockyards Administration. Data collected indicated that the packers' captive supplies increased from 19.3 percent in 1988 to 22.4 percent in 1989. On a monthly basis, the captive supplies ranged from a high of 30.1 percent in June 1989 to a low of 18.6 percent in November of that year.

During 1989, these firms contracted 17.2 percent and fed 5.2 percent. In 1988, they contracted 14.3 percent and fed 5 percent, or 19.3 percent of the total slaughter for that year. Marketing agreements are included in the percentage contracted by packer firms.

While packing firms and plants have grown over the past few years, the supply of slaughter livestock has been reduced. Increased capacity for processing, along with reduced cattle numbers, force packers to actively seek the available cattle. Packers obtain their captive supplies through their own cattle feeding programs, forward contracting, and marketing agreements with feeders.

Captive supplies accounted for 24.9 percent of the top four firms' slaughter in 1989, an increase of 4.4 percent over 1988 figures. Of this amount, 19.3 percent was contracted and 5.6 percent fed. The 1988 percentage of total slaughter contracted was 15.8, and percentage fed was 4.7.

In the High Plains and Colorado marketing areas, 24.7 percent of the total slaughter for 1989 was contracted, and 6.8 percent was fed, for a total of 31.5 percent. The 1988 figures showed that 25.1 percent of total slaughter was fed and contracted. Nineteen percent of that amount was contracted, and 6.1 percent fed.

Nebraska and Iowa accounted for 8.7 percent of total slaughter fed and contracted, down slightly from 9.2 percent in 1988. The percent contracted dropped from 7.3 percent in 1988 to 7 percent in 1989. There was also a decrease in the percentage fed, from 1.9 in 1988 to 1.7 in 1989.

Sara Wright (202) 382-9528.1

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UNRAVELING THOSE TRACE MINERAL INTERACTIONS CAN DRIVE YOU CRAZY

Washington—It's no wonder that U.S. Department of Agriculture nutrition researchers have had difficulty nailing down a suspected link between low copper intakes and coronary heart disease.

The latest findings indicate people's genetic makeup—in addition to their sex and the types of proteins and carbohydrates in test diets—may influence how they respond to short periods of inadequate copper, according to researchers with USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

In a study of 10 men who got less than half the suggested copper intake for six weeks, four of them responded with a significant increase in cholesterol—at least 7.5 percent. This was primarily in the undesirable LDL cholesterol, said research chemist David Milne.

Also, their blood platelets—the “quarterbacks” of clotting—got larger and stuck together more readily, Milne said. This clotting tendency is thought to contribute to the formation of plaques that narrow arteries.

But the other six men didn’t show these symptoms. In fact, cholesterol levels went down during the low-copper period but only when the diets contained an amino acid that has been found to alter copper metabolism in animals, said Forrest H. Nielsen, director of ARS’s Human Nutrition Research Center in Grand Forks, N.D.

“In other words,” Nielsen said, “it would not be surprising to find that, in the general population, insufficient copper causes cholesterol to drop, rise or stay the same because genetic makeup and amino acid intake of individuals differ.”

He said the two groups of men also had opposite changes in levels of hormones involved in blood sugar metabolism during the low-copper period.

All 10 of the men, however, showed early signs of copper deficiency based on the most sensitive test—the activity of the copper-containing enzyme ceruloplasmin, said Milne. There were inconsistencies between groups in other tests of copper status.

“Despite the inconsistencies,” Nielsen said, “many of the changes indicate that a longer period of copper depletion could be detrimental to human health.”

The men consumed only 0.65 milligram of copper each day for six weeks. The suggested intake is at least 1.5 mg/day, but an estimated 35 percent of Americans get only 1 mg/day or less, according to center scientist Leslie Klevay.

Klevay first proposed in 1972 that a shortage of dietary copper is at the root of heart disease. Since then, ARS nutrition scientists have seen all of the symptoms associated with this disease, including an increase in blood pressure and male susceptibility, develop over the course of human and animal studies. But results have been inconsistent.

For instance, one strain of rats responds more dramatically to copper deficiency than another strain, Nielsen said. And both strains are more vulnerable when their feed contains specific but different amounts of sulfur-containing amino acids. Researchers have found at least six variations of the copper-containing enzyme ceruloplasmin in people, he said.

“Such findings,” he said, “support the hypothesis that genetic make-up may affect people’s response to low-copper diets.”

April 22-28 is National Consumers Week. USDA is addressing consumer issues that include nutrition, food safety, and new food technologies.

Judy McBride (301) 344-4095

Issued: April 27, 1990

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PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR UNKNOWN

WASHINGTON, April 27—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture export sales of 300,000 metric tons of corn for delivery to unknown destinations during the 1989-90 marketing year.

The marketing year for corn begins Sept. 1.

USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric tons or more of one commodity, made in one day, to one destination by 3:00 PM, eastern time on the next business day following the sale. Export sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

#

GRANTS GIVEN 16 STATES TO START SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAMS

WASHINGTON, April 27—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has awarded \$3 million in federal grants to school districts in 16 states to help start school breakfast programs.

USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service, which administers the School Breakfast Program, awarded the grants to Arizona, California, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont, and Virginia.

The grants are part of a five-year program to provide startup funds for new breakfast programs. In addition to \$3 million for 1990, \$5 million will be awarded for new programs each year through 1994.

FNS Administrator Betty Jo Nelsen said the grants will contribute to better nutrition and better learning for the children at the schools which start breakfast programs. “We know that a good breakfast contributes to good nutrition,” Nelsen said, “and we know that kids who are well nourished have the energy they need to learn, work, and play through a long school day.”

Nelsen said the grants were awarded on the basis of need, number of children to be added to the program, and feasibility and cost-effectiveness of the states’ proposals.

She said the federal grants will supplement money being provided by the states to start the new breakfast programs. Most of the grant money will be spent by the school districts for capital expenditures, she said, but some will also go for training of food service workers and to publicize the new programs.

The amounts awarded to the 16 states are:

Arizona	\$ 19,140	Michigan	\$ 84,681
California	864,980	Minnesota	111,029
Connecticut	62,227	Missouri	3,948
Florida	393,914	Pennsylvania	495,811
Indiana	6,825	South Carolina	180,210
Kansas	145,000	South Dakota	136,115
Kentucky	83,879	Vermont	79,619
Maine	54,979	Virginia	306,312

Phil Shanholtzer (703) 756-3286

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TWO MICHIGAN FIRMS RECALL FRESH PORK SAUSAGE STATEWIDE

WASHINGTON, April 27—Dave’s Sausage Factory, of Detroit, Mich., and Mancini Sausage Company, of Harpers Woods, Mich., are voluntarily recalling approximately 3,000 pounds and 500 pounds of fresh sausage, respectively, because the sausage may contain sulfites. “Sulfites can pose serious health risks for people who are sensitive to these

compounds,” said Dr. Lester M. Crawford, administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service.

The sausage links produced by Dave’s Sausage Factory are marketed under the names “Wisbisky’s Polish Sausage,” “Vetro’s Italian Sausage” and “Dave’s Pork Links.” The first two products are sold in clear plastic bags, weighing about 1-1/2 pounds each. The label on the bag shows the product name and has “Est. 10198” printed inside the USDA inspection seal. “Dave’s Pork Links” are repackaged by stores and may be sold under a private brand name. All three products are distributed to grocery stores, delicatessens and restaurants in Michigan.

The sausage produced by Mancini Sausage Company is marketed under the name “Polish Brand Sausage.” This sausage is also sold in clear plastic bags, weighing about 1-1/2 pounds each. The white printing on the bag shows the product name, “Est. 10210” printed inside the USDA inspection seal, and the words “produced by Mancini’s Sausage Company.” The “Polish Brand Sausage” is sold to delicatessens only.

Only the four products specifically mentioned above are being recalled.

“Although no illnesses have been reported, we urge consumers to immediately return the sausage to the place of purchase. Consumers who suspect they may have purchased ‘Dave’s Pork Links’ under another brand name should ask the seller where the sausage came from and return it if necessary. Managers of grocery stores, delicatessens and restaurants should return the sausage to the distributor,” said Crawford.

“Sulfites are not permitted as direct additives to meat or poultry food products,” Crawford said. “When ingredients that contain sulfites are added to a meat or poultry product, such as vegetables in a stew, sulfites must be listed in the ingredients statement on the label.” However, he noted, pork sausage does not contain any ingredients to which sulfites would normally be added.

The problem was discovered during routine checks by USDA compliance officers. Both firms are cooperating with USDA.

Consumers with questions about the recall may phone the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555. The hotline can be reached from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (EDT) Monday through Friday. At other times a recording with information about the recall will be provided. Callers in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area should call 447-3333. Both phone numbers provide access to a telecommunications device for the hearing impaired.

The Food Safety and Inspection Service inspects all meat and poultry sold in interstate commerce to ensure that it is safe, wholesome and accurately labeled.

Jim Greene (202) 382-0314

#

USDA RESEARCHERS REPORT PROGRESS HOMING IN ON PESKY WHEAT APHID

WASHINGTON—Barley, one of the Russian wheat aphid's favorite snacks, could lose its appeal, U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists have reported.

Their discovery of nine breeding lines of barley that stand up to the aphid marks the latest of recent hopeful signs in a four-year struggle to thwart this costly insect pest. Along with barley, the Russian wheat aphid attacks wheat, rye and forage plants.

“In rigorous growth chamber and greenhouse tests, at least five of the nine barley lines weren't hospitable places for aphids to reproduce. And some lines thrived despite heavy feeding by aphids,” said entomologist James A. Webster of the USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

He said at least one major brewing company is using the lines to try to develop new varieties of malting barley that can be grown without insecticide. And Colorado State University agronomists are running field tests to see if these lines can be grown profitably for livestock feeds in aphid-infested areas, he added. Webster, an entomologist, is based at the ARS Plant Science Research Laboratory in Stillwater, Okla.

First spotted in the United States—in Texas—in 1986, the aphid has spread to 16 western states. It has hit farmers with more than \$240 million in damage and control costs on small grains, Webster said.

According to an ARS report that sums up the agency's headway against the pest at Stillwater and seven other agency labs, Webster screened 524 of the 26,000 barley lines stored in the agency's National Small Grain Collection in Aberdeen, Idaho. Among the resistant lines were five from Afghanistan and one from Iran.

Other highlights in the research summary include:

—Several lines of wheat, wild relatives of wheat, rye, triticale (a man-made cross of wheat and rye) and forage grasses resisted the aphid in

greenhouse tests. Screening of crops for aphid resistance will eventually include some 43,000 lines of wheat at Aberdeen.

—Studies on how and when the aphid damages plants reveal potentially useful strategies for farmers, as well as clues for finding resistant small grains.

—Parasites, predators and pathogens are continually being collected overseas—including the Soviet Union—shipped to labs in the U.S. and tested to identify the best candidates for mass rearing and releasing to kill Russian wheat aphids.

—Enzymes of closely related foreign species of aphid parasites and predators are being fingerprinted to distinguish them from native species. That's so researchers can separate the effects of native and exotic species.

The research summary is based on a more detailed report by entomologist Robert L. Burton. Besides heading the Stillwater plant science lab, he is ARS technical coordinator of Russian wheat aphid research.

Ben Hardin (309) 685-4011

Issued: April 30, 1990

#

THE PROPOSES REGULATIONS FOR THE TARGETED EXPORT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, April 27—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to revise regulations for the Targeted Export Assistance (TEA) Program, Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder Said today.

The proposed rule would expand the existing TEA regulations by incorporating program requirements that now appear only in TEA agreements and guidelines, Crowder said.

The proposal includes new provisions regarding the criteria USDA considers when it reviews applications and allocates funds to TEA participants; requiring participants to contribute resources equal to at least five percent of the TEA allocation provided by USDA; establishing a maximum reimbursement rate of 50 percent for eligible promotionthe use of TEA resources to reimburse salary and allowancerelated expenses of TEA participant employees and consultants overseas. Current regulations regarding program participation, referred to as conflict of interest

requirements, are not being revised, Crowder said. In addition, this proposed rule does not apply to the Foreign Agricultural Service's Cooperator program.

Interested parties have until June 25 to comment on the proposed regulations. Comments must be submitted in writing to Director, Marketing Programs Division, Foreign Agricultural Service, USDA, Room 4932-S, Washington, D.C. 20250-1000.

The proposed regulations appeared in the April 26 Federal Register.

The TEA program is required by the Food Security Act of 1985. The act directs the secretary of agriculture to use Commodity Credit Corporation funds or commodities to counter or offset the adverse effects of unfair foreign trade practices on the export of a U.S. agricultural commodities. Under TEA, USDA provides surplus CCC stocks or funds to partially reimburse agricultural organizations conducting specific foreign market development projects for eligible products in specified countries.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

#

USDA AGAIN EXTENDS COMMENT PERIOD ON SALMONELLA IN POULTRY

WASHINGTON, April 30—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is again extending the comment period for its recent regulations establishing a control program for *Salmonella enteritidis* (SE) in U.S. table-egg poultry flocks.

“We are extending the comment period another 30 days to June 1 to allow the industry and others more time to evaluate the regulations,” said James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

“The original deadline for comments was April 17, but was extended to May 2,” Glosser said. “However, we have received numerous requests from state animal health agencies, commercial egg producers and poultry associations for an additional extension.”

Under the regulations, which became effective on publication in the Feb. 16 Federal Register, interstate movement of chickens, eggs and associated articles from flocks infected or associated with SE are restricted; and all egg production breeding flocks must be classified

“U.S. Sanitation Monitored” under the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP), or meet the requirements of an equivalent state program, in order to move interstate.

“Salmonella enteritidis is a growing problem for the egg industry and is a public health concern as well,” said Glosser. “This program is designed to control SE in table eggs from two fronts: testing and certification of the breeding flocks that produce table-egg layers, and tracebacks and testing of commercial table-egg layer flocks if and when they are implicated in SE outbreaks in humans.”

Notice of the extension period for comments is being published in the May 1 Federal Register. Comments will be accepted if they are received on or May 23 in Washington, D.C.

Allen Atwood (202) 475-3367

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CCC INTEREST RATE FOR MAY 8-3/8 PERCENT

WASHINGTON, May 1—Commodity loans disbursed in May by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Commodity Credit Corporation will carry an 8-3/8 percent interest rate, according to John Stevenson, acting executive vice president of the CCC.

The 8-3/8 percent rate is up from April’s 8-1/4 percent and reflects the interest rate charged CCC by the U.S. Treasury in May.

Robert Feist (202) 447-6789

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, May 1—Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture John B. Campbell today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

- long grain whole kernels, 8.87 cents per pound;
- medium grain whole kernels, 7.95 cents per pound;
- short grain whole kernels, 7.84 cents per pound;
- broken kernels, 4.43 cents per pound.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, rough rice world prices are estimated to be:

- long grain, \$5.48 per hundredweight;
- medium grain, \$4.97 per hundredweight;
- short grain, \$4.79 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3 p.m. EDT. The next scheduled price announcement will be made May 8 at 3 p.m. EDT, although prices may be announced sooner if warranted.

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USDA PROPOSES CHANGE IN IMPORT REGULATIONS FOR SOME MEAT AND MILK PRODUCTS

WASHINGTON, May 1—The U.S. Department of Agriculture proposed today to relax some of its current regulations on imports of fresh, chilled and frozen meat, and milk and milk products of ruminants and swine. The proposal addresses those shipments coming from countries free of rinderpest or foot-and-mouth disease but which, en route to the United States, may stop in a country affected by these diseases.

“Under the current regulations, these shipments must be sealed in the country of origin, and the seal must still be intact when the shipments arrive in the United States,” said James W. Glosser, administrator of the USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

Glosser said the current method of bulk packaging and containerized shipping is one of the safest means of handling meat and dairy shipments. He said that the proposal would allow the seal to be placed on a container, rather than the entire hold or compartment of a carrier. The proposal also establishes certain conditions under which the meat or milk products could remain eligible for entry into the United States if the seal has been broken or replaced, he said.

While nearly all shipments arrive in the United States intact, a small portion do arrive with seals that have been broken or have a different number than is recorded on shipping documents.

Under the proposal these kinds of shipments would remain eligible for entry into the United States as long as certain conditions are met. These would include a combination of documentation and inspection that would allow USDA to verify the circumstances under which a seal was broken

or replaced, while assuring that the products reaching U.S. shores meet U.S. standards.

The proposal will be published in the May 2 Federal Register. Comments will be accepted if they are received on or before July 2. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket number 85-095 should be sent to: Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 866, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Comments may be inspected at USDA, Rm. 1141-S, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

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USDA ANNOUNCES PUBLIC HEARING IN CALIFORNIA ON FLORIDA CITRUS CANCER

WASHINGTON, May 1—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced that a public hearing will be held in California on a proposal to ease citrus canker quarantine restrictions in Florida.

The proposal would remove most of Florida from a quarantine imposed because of the “Florida nursery strain” of canker—a type of bacterium which until recently was thought to cause citrus canker. A portion of Manatee County, where there have been infestations caused by the Asiatic or A- strain of citrus canker within the past 2 years, would continue to be regulated under the new quarantine.

Under current regulations, the entire state of Florida is quarantined because of citrus canker. The proposal would remove restrictions on the interstate movement of citrus and certain other plants, fruits and seeds from all of Florida except that portion of Manatee County, which would remain under quarantine.

A public hearing on the proposed rule is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on May 15, at the Holiday Inn Ontario Airport, Vineyard Room, 1801 East G Street, Ontario, Calif. A similar hearing was held in Palmetto, Fla., on April 25.

The additional hearing is being held in response to a request from the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

Registration is from 9-10 a.m. for persons wishing to speak at the meeting. A speaker's time may be limited in accordance with the number of participants. Anyone reading a statement will be asked to submit two copies to the presiding APHIS official.

Written comments on the original proposed rule, to be published in the May 2 Federal Register, will be accepted if they are received on or before May 29. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket no. 89-040 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 866, Federal Building, 6506 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Comments and public hearing transcripts may be inspected at USDA, Rm. 1141-S, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

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PHOTOSYNTHESIS TAKES A NAP IN THE AFTERNOON

WASHINGTON—On warm, dry afternoons, corn takes a photosynthesis siesta that slows its growth, according to the findings of a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist.

This is the first report of such an afternoon drop in photosynthesis in the C4 family of plants to which corn belongs, said James A. Bunce, a plant physiologist with USDA's Agricultural Research Service. This family of plants is called C4 because of the first product of the photosynthesis cycle has four carbon atoms, explained Bunce, who works at the Plant Photobiology Laboratory in Beltsville, Md.

He said the photosynthetic rate drops a total of about 30 percent on warm, dry afternoons in normal growing conditions. "A drop like that on a regular basis translates to cutting growth by about 10 percent."

He found the photosynthesis-slump phenomenon in laboratory studies and confirmed it under field conditions.

"As soon as the humidity directly around the leaves drops, the leaves dry out slightly and the rate of photosynthesis drops, even if the soil around the roots of the plant is wet," he said

Bunce expects that it should be possible to find corn varieties that react less to humidity decreases or to breed the potential into commercial

varieties. "It will be easier to screen for higher photosynthesis now that we know what limits it in corn," he said.

An afternoon decline in the photosynthesis rate previously had been found only in the C3 category of crops such as soybeans and wheat, where the first photosynthesis product has only three carbon atoms.

The C3 and C4 plants followed different evolutionary tracks to developing photosynthesis, which made it appear unlikely that both groups would show the afternoon drop in photosynthesis, Bunce explained.

Carbon dioxide is the limiting factor in the rate of photosynthesis of the C3 plants like wheat. These crops close down their stomata—pores on the leaves through which carbon dioxide enters—to prevent the loss of moisture as temperature rises in the afternoon. The drop in carbon dioxide available inside the leaf causes a drop in the rate of photosynthesis.

But C4 crops such as corn and sorghum store the compounds they need for photosynthesis. For these plants, the process can be continuous rather than directly limited by the amount of carbon dioxide coming in at any one time. The photosynthetic rate should not be cut even if the plants' stomates close down to preserve moisture, according to Bunce.

"And corn does not even have afternoon stomatal closure so it, in said Bunce. "But it does."

Increasing afternoon heat doesn't directly limit photosynthesis. When other conditions are equal, high temperature favors photosynthesis in corn, according to Bunce.

"Lack of humidity directly around the leaves appears to drive the drop," he said. When temperatures rose, but humidity was kept high, the rate of photosynthesis did not drop.

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